

# PLAIN TALKS

Vol. 14

JANUARY, 1936

No. 1

"The way  
Better is the  
Electric way"







*hurry!*

# SPECIAL OFFER

JANUARY  
ONLY

## TO ALL G. S. U. CO. EMPLOYEES

For this month only the Automatic Electric Heater Company and Graybar have made possible a SPECIAL LOW PRICE for Employees on the NEW SEPCO "40." We were able to secure a carload of 80 heaters for this sale and they are going like hot cakes. "Electric" water heating has "arrived." This heater has proved itself another dependable electric servant and we unhesitatingly recommend it. The regular retail price of this Sepco is \$99.50 installed. The regular employee price is \$58.00 installed. The special January price is \$46.75 installed. Plumbing connections are not included at this price but can be financed with the heater if desired. If you are at all interested in this offer act now as the supply should soon be exhausted.

*P. E. McChesney*

TAKE 36 MONTHS TO PAY  
TERMS AS LOW AS

**\$1.30**

A MONTH



# President Walker Addresses General Meeting at Beaumont

## Praises Spirit of Employees

(Talk delivered Jan. 4 at Hotel Beaumont)

In the beginning, may I pay a tribute to you and all other fellow-workers in the Gulf States family: We've seen some discouraging times together during the past few years. Our industry has been maligned and persecuted; our own company has suffered business losses so severe that its life was threatened and each one of us personally has made real sacrifices with an understanding patience. Those who have had the terrible responsibilities of keeping business a going concern during these tragic and uncertain times could have accomplished nothing had it not been for the courageous team work of faithful, loyal employees everywhere.

I think we are now standing on solid enough ground to pause a moment and congratulate ourselves on the calm, deliberate attitude with which we met these discouraging problems. We've kept our chins up. We've kept our poise. We've kept our faith; and because we've kept all these, we've made new friends and won even better the old. I think we're slowly on our way out, and I confidently believe that 1936 will mean some sort of definite progress for each of us.

During recent months, the breaking of the jam has opened up promotions for some of our friends. We've been glad to wish them well, knowing that some day, if we deserve larger responsibilities, the way may open up for us. People are buying new appliances at a rate that is having its effect on our output and eventually these increases will find their way into the net, wherein the financial success of our company is measured. Step by step, discounting, of course, complete annihilation by some governmental clique, we should move forward together—the same resolute team that has come through so gloriously these past few years.

Have you ever stopped to consider how important in the scheme of busi-

ness is the retail salesman? Profitable employment so necessary to prosperity is found in busy factories, steel mills, mines and the various manufactures, but until the product is actually sold to the consumer, the process of manufacture is incomplete and the worker's labor is vain. Unless you and the thousands of other salesmen throughout the United States can put ranges and refrigerators, automobiles, radios, furniture and all the vast array of commodities of trade into the home and collect the money from the ultimate consumer, the whole process of manufacturing, with its by-products of labor and wages is thrown out of joint.

All political and economic questions, in the final analysis, focus on a man's burning ambition for a chance to live

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## Useful Ideas Are Presented at Meeting

Some one hundred and fifty superintendents, district representatives and other employees of the company met in Beaumont January 4 to start the new year right by reviewing accomplishments of 1935 and to learn of plans for 1936.

From the time the meeting was called to order in the morning until adjournment in the late afternoon, the meeting was strictly business although an hour and a half for lunch and a recess during the afternoon gave everyone an opportunity to see old acquaintances.

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# Novel "Hookup" Brings Message from Mr. Hanlon

"You have done splendid work down there in Texas and Louisiana in the past, and on behalf of the New York branch of the family, I send you best wishes for continued success and happiness in the New Year."

With these words, Mr. Tom Hanlon, vice president of Engineers Public Service company, brought to a close an inspiring talk to members of our organization who attended the morning session of the general meeting January 4. Unable to be present, his voice came via long distance telephone and loud speakers, from New York to the Hotel Beaumont Rose Room.

Pointing out that private ownership and initiative of the telephone people and not an alphabetical government agency made such a hook-up possible, Mr. Hanlon discussed the outlook for 1936.

"Believing honestly and sincerely in the integrity of our industry as a whole, and believing that ultimately right must always prevail over wrong" he declared it his hope and belief that, sooner or later, "there must be a square deal for utility operating companies and honest, useful utility holding companies."

There is evident, he said, a growing demand for fair, sane policies in this direction, a demand that the innocent not be punished along with the few that are guilty. His advice for 1936:

"Keep yourself informed and be able to answer intelligently questions your customers may ask concerning the so-called holding company fight, which isn't a fight against the government but a fight against discriminatory legislation that was forced through a Congress that didn't realize the far-reaching disastrous effects of the bill . . . Continue to give the excellent service at reasonable rates which has made so many friends for you in the past . . . Your residential customers must think it is mighty good service at a very reasonable price for during the past year their average use increased 106 Kw-h. . . . you must realize that without an increase of this nature, it would be practically impossible to meet the new and higher taxes that are increasing at an alarming rate . . . I know I don't have to tell you how important it is that you succeed in carrying out your load building program and I know that you will because you have the reputation of doing what you set out to do."

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## Four Points to Any Sale Outlined by Mr. Johnson

"There are four major points to any sale," declared Fred Johnson, in discussing 'HOW TO SELL' at the General meeting. "I will give you these and at the same time make the application to our particular industry:

"First—Select a product and study it so that you will sell yourself on it.

We have the products, of course, and each day you are given opportunity to know them through literature and through their use.

"Second—Find prospects for your products.

There are many ways to find prospects. I will give you a few of them that you probably don't think of:

- a. Use the user—Sell him more appliances as his rate gets lower for the more current he consumes. Find out what he wants and go after him.
- b. Use the office calls—When

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# Kw-h. Goal of 885 for 1936 Announced by Mr. McChesney

Because, as chairman of the general meeting, so many of his remarks were scattered throughout the program in his introductions of speakers and comments as talks were concluded, it is difficult to report what Mr. McChesney had to say on Saturday, January 4, at Hotel Beaumont, in related order.

His own place on the program was at the close when he declared "the only way we can keep Gulf States going is to sell more Kw-h's, and that is what we are going to do in 1936."

The Kw-h. goal for 1936 will be 885 per year per home customer, he revealed. This will be achieved by the sale of 706 water heaters, 1506 ranges, 1906 refrigerators, Sight-Saver lamps and small appliances.

Mr. McChesney pointed out that starting with 613 Kw-h. per customer at the end of 1933, we increased the average to 659 in 1934 and added 105 in 1935 to bring the present average to 764.

To help keep the public reminded that the better way is the electric way, he estimated that more than 30,000,000 messages would go to our customers. The slogan will be used in all newspaper and other printed advertising. Through the cooperation of the accounting department, every bill envelope and every bill will carry the reminder. Truck posters and window displays will be developed around the idea. Even price tags will carry the slogan.

Much of this information was contained in large pages which he turned in making his closing talk. He urged using the user, pointing out that we now have 1.9% saturation on water heaters, 10% on ranges and 44.9% on refrigeration.

The final pages of the book were devoted to the heading "Don't Let George Do It" and a cartoon showing a little man carrying a piano while a big man carried the piano stool. Mr. McChesney brought out that the only way we could make our 1936 bogie would be for every one to carry a fair share of the load and not to depend on "George" to do the job.

During the day Mr. McChesney pointed out that one of the first lessons he had learned when he came with the company was that every department has to function properly to make the company a success, using the three legs of the stool as an example of the necessity for coordination. He also emphasized the willingness of the older men in the organization to help the newcomers and publicly thanked Joe Potts for help and guidance back almost twenty years ago. He expressed appreciation to all for their cooperation during the past year.

"We better pause now to pat ourselves on the back for the good job we've done selling 1200 ranges in 1935," he said, "because after this afternoon we will be selling so hard we won't have time to indulge such fancies."

In introducing Fred F. Johnson, he pointed out that many salesmen think the way to sell is to talk a lot. "As a matter of fact," he added, "it is the salesman who gets the prospect to talk and thus learns of the desires and needs of the prospect who makes sales." He announced that in the near future, Mr. Johnson would start classes in salesmanship and invited members of other departments who are interested to attend.



# Manufacturers Speak Over "Hookup"



A high spot of the afternoon session of the general meeting were five-minute talks by manufacturers of the major appliances we sell. Summarized:

Mr. James B. Bailey, president, Automatic Electric Heater Company, speaking from Philadelphia: Our company has been a pioneer in the manufacture of a practical electric water heater. Your company has been a pioneer in the sale . . . By making installation free so far as wiring and ordinary plumbing are concerned and by going to three years on easy terms, it has brought down first cost . . . By establishing a flat rate of one cent a kilowatt hour a family of ordinary means can afford to enjoy its use . . . in electric water heating you have a "better way" to offer . . . years of pioneering effort are now bearing fruit . . . people beginning to realize distinctive and exclusive advantages . . . however with water heating as with refrigeration and cooking, we will not be able to do the job we should do until those of us in the industry practice what we preach . . . so we have made it possible for you to get a Sepco at a special low price during January . . . let me congratulate you on your fine work in the past and wish you a very happy and successful New Year with Sepcos.

\* \* \*

Mr. Gerald Hulett, vice president of Electromaster, Inc., talking from Detroit: To help you sell ranges in 1936, Electromaster gives you two new ranges . . . the cream of the crop . . . quality products at reasonable prices . . . but whether or not you succeed in achieving the goal you have set for 1936 depends, of course, on you . . . best

products, best terms, best rates are not going to get the names on the dotted line . . . that the electric way is the better way for cooking is a story we must tell over and over with sincere enthusiasm if we are to reach the saturation for which we hope. We must not let the interest we have developed in cooking go to waste by presuming that we have "arrived" . . . you know, of course, that selling, like genius, is one part inspiration to about ten of perspiration. But head work, as well as leg work, should be classed under the heading "hard work" . . . the planning of our work and the working of our plan require sticktoitiveness, not inspiration. . . Electromaster appreciates the fine work you are doing. We hope for each and every one of you a happy and successful new year.

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Mr. P. B. Zimmerman, official of General Electric company; speaking from Cleveland: Here are refrigerators pulling up at the rear of the procession this afternoon when everyone knows that refrigeration is the keystone in building load through all-electric kitchens . . . In politics there is a saying that "as Maine goes, so goes the nation." In our business it's a case of "as refrigeration goes, so goes the kitchen." . . . General Electric company gives you products of proved performance and even greater efficiency, which to the customer means greater economy of operation. Our Flatop is now available in porcelain so you can sell "all three" in 1936—the Monitor Top, the Flatop and the Liftop . . . General Electric, which originated the idea of the all-electric kitchen step-by-step, will continue in 1936 to promote this idea. I'm sure you will agree that it has already taken hold of the imagination of the women of our country and has resulted not only in refrigerator sales, but in range and water heater sales . . . Many refrigerators have reached old age and in 1936 will be replaced by another refrigerator or another electric refrigerator . . . our part is to give you the products, competitive in every respect . . . yours to get the names on the dotted line . . . I'm sure that when you meet again next year you can say "as refrigeration goes, so goes the kitchen—and it has gone all-electric."



## Mr. Reidy Asks Co-operation on Safety

“Safety, like charity, should begin at home”, according to Mr. Reidy who talked on safety at the general meeting. “Watch little things like toys on the floor, and mops and brooms, that you might fall over. Don’t stand on a rocking chair to hang a picture.

“Make sure, before backing out of your driveway in the morning, that your own child or a neighbor’s is not in the way. Before rolling into the street be sure it’s clear.

“When driving a company car, park off of the highway. Don’t drive into a customer’s driveway. Park out in front.” He urged salesmen to use gates in making their rounds and abandon short cuts over picket fences. In cases of dog bite, report it immediately to the city authorities and have the dog observed for the prescribed period.

“During 1935,” Mr. Reidy said, “about half as much was spent paying off on accidents as in the previous year. With every one practicing safety, even the 1935 figure can be substantially reduced.”

## Refund Plan Big Success Says Mr. Faber

Six thousand and thirty-seven deposit refunds have been made and \$64,919 in gross merchandise sales has resulted, Mr. Faber reported at the general meeting. More than one out of every six customers receiving a refund has applied the money on the purchase price of an appliance of some kind, and Mr. Faber urged superintendents and salesmen to make full use of this selling tool.

The treasurer complimented the superintendents on the splendid cooperation they had given in securing reductions in some taxes which had made it possible for the company to absorb others. (It was pointed out later by Mr. Walker that while we have succeeded in reducing our total tax bill, taxes are an increasing burden and amount proportionately to more because of shrinkage in revenue.) He urged superintendents, and all employees, to take advantage of opportunities to tell those in charge of tax matters in their local communities more about the company.

He discussed collections and the fine record that had been made and urged continued efforts in this direction, calling attention to the fact that collections become much less of a problem when they are followed closely month to month.

He urged superintendents to get prices reduced on shopworn merchandise and get rid of it, “Keep it moving and you will like the sales job better,” he said.

## Poor Lighting Takes Heavy Toll; Only 2000 Use Lamps Which Provide Proper Light

Holding up a 750 watt light globe, which is very much larger than most of us had seen before, Mr. Whiton started his talk at the General Meeting by pointing out

that the equivalent wattage of this globe should be added to the home lighting of most of our customers. In other

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# President Walker

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a little better than he now lives. Our social security legislation is designed to promise security to a man out of a job or too old to work—a chance to live. Tremendous demands for automobiles, radios, electrical appliances, are all expressions of this burning ambition—a chance to live. A most tremendous force—almost irresistible—is this will of people to possess something better. During the past few years, these desires have been dammed because of economic conditions, and now there is an enormous pent-up demand awaiting satisfaction. Most people do not know just what they want because there are so many things needed. It may be rugs; it may be bedroom furniture; a new car; a radio; an electric range—you can make the list as well as I—and a smart man in business today is he who can foresee what people want before they themselves decide, so that he may be prepared to deliver the goods when demanded.

People want so many other things than the convenience which electrical appliances bring to their homes. There are many different types of emancipation for the housewife and members of her family which creates a real competition for Father's earnings. It is our job to convince the buyer that our kind of emancipation is broader and carries a wider freedom than any that can be bought for an equivalent cost. You are doing just that thing in a splendid way, but never for a moment lose sight of the fact that this competition exists and that these successes, if they are to continue, require the same kind of hard work which produced past gains.

Not only does the retail salesman play an important part in the larger scheme of business and economics, but particularly in our own industry are his services most valuable at this time. As we sell the wider use of electricity for the home, the store, and industry, we create better satisfied customers; we make it easier to meet our obligations, to increase compensation of employes, to decrease rates, and in many directions help solve our many problems. Yours is a challenging responsibility. Your record of the past makes me know you will meet it in the future.

With the changing times, by which I mean the slow drag out of the de-

pression depths which now is in progress, we should recognize the fact that if we are to win our rightful place in the competitive field, we must quicken our stride, step out with a bit more daring—more in the spirit of adventure. Sure, swift movement will be the order of the day, and the business man who knows what he is doing and why he is doing it will attain the greater success. There will be a much greater difference in effectiveness between the slow worker and the fast mover during the next few years, assuming of course that the fast mover moves intelligently and with a high purpose.

Like a staunch rock standing broadly at the base of every effort, no matter how farsighted or how alert our plans may seem, must be the sincere desire consciously to perform some useful service to society. Regardless of how high-pressure our programs may become, we must never lose sight of the fact that the Gulf States Utilities Company is a service organization and its success in the past and in the future can only be measured by the satisfaction it renders each individual customer in the communities it serves.

Our company, and in truth, our industry, must face many problems during the next few years. None of them is very new, because I believe the worst have already been clearly outlined. The most serious of them all is the vicious political attack, of which you are well informed. Heretofore, what few political differences we have had were confined to our local communities, and while some of them have seemed unjust and unfair, somehow or other we have always composed our differences amicably. The attack now is national and financed by unprecedented tax levies. Because of the impossible conditions laid down in the "death sentence" bill which was forced on a reluctant Congress, all that was good in the holding company system and all good holding companies had to cast their lot with all that was bad in the system and with all bad companies. There was no middle ground. There was no compromise. I cannot help but believe that this political attack, while more virile and dangerous than those in the past, will finally be composed in such a way that our industry will attain its manifest destiny and that the honest, enlightened and civic-minded members of the industry will be allowed to exercise the wise leadership of which they are capable.



Our business also has the problems of other industries, the most pressing now being taxes. Does it surprise you to know that for every dollar you receive as salary or wages, the company pays another 50c as taxes? Does it surprise you to know that for every dollar our customers pay us, more than 10c must be handed over to some tax collector? No industry can progress with this terrible handicap. One of our major difficulties for a number of years will be the retarding influence of high taxes, stifling initiative and discouraging development. Not until a fully-awakened citizenry realize that in the final analysis the gigantic tax burdens being piled up billion upon billion must come out of individual pay envelopes will we see a return to the sane, sensible, economic ideas which in the past have given us the highest measure of material blessings.

We have a number of new faces in the group today and I should like to ask the indulgence of the rest of you while I talk briefly to those who have joined our organization during this past year.

You have been very carefully selected from among a large number of possible candidates as worthy successors to a splendid tradition which the Gulf States Utilities Company has built up throughout the years in the vast empire it serves. To some of you, perhaps, it merely appears that you got a job when jobs were hard to find; and perhaps your selection of it was without premeditated purpose. You were selected not because you had any particular background or experience which would fit you for a specific task, but because a careful appraisal of you and your past actions suggested the capacity to win an honorable career in this company and in this industry. As you develop in this business, gradually you will get the "feel" of the things for which this company stands, and one element in your success will be the degree and the speed with which you assimilate this "feel." Perhaps I can suggest a few short-cuts to you—a few of the things for which you may be looking, so that when they are told to you or when they appear, you will recognize them as essential principles.

Fundamentally, this company is organized to render a necessary service at the cheapest price possible consistent with good business judgment and the needs of that service. We cannot discriminate but must assure uniformly to every customer the fullest measure of

service we can render. No customer's difficulties are so trivial that they do not deserve our best efforts. If ever you leave one not certain that he is entirely satisfied, you should make it a point to discuss the situation with your department head so that he may be able to take additional steps, if necessary.

You may find some of our customers who tax your patience, but it is your job to handle these particularly with infinite care. It is from our critics that we learn best to add the refinements which over a period of years have won for us a multitude of friends and well-wishers.

You will find in this company a fine bunch of fellow-employees—fellows who are anxious to see you succeed—fellows who can be good friends—the kind of which you need never be ashamed. They have learned to work as a team; they do not respect the prima donna, but will do everything in the world to help one who plays the game. Call on them; cultivate them; they were your friends the minute you were found worthy of a job with this company.

You will find, too, a local organization and a national organization—by which I mean Stone & Webster—which have been made great by first finding young men such as you are in various parts of this country and then giving them opportunities which could carry them to whatever heights their ambitions and capacities might lead. Some of our best leaders have waited long, dry spells for recognition. At times, progress seemed slow, and at other times the unworthy seemed to have prospered ahead of those who deserved better. All these interruptions, however, were mere incidents in their steady march forward.

Some day you, or you, will be touched on the shoulder and singled out for more important responsibilities. Unless Congress repeals the law of averages, some of you will progress in the Stone & Webster organization to substantial responsibilities. You are all starting out together now, neck and neck. You are being judged and looked over each day as you go about your work. Those of you who had sincere and serious aspirations when you were selected will find the way much smoother and the going much more rapid than those who came just to find a job.

May I wish all of you the best kind of a New Year possible.



# Small Power Loads Add Up

“Little drops of water make a mighty ocean,” quoted Mr. Robinson in his talk on small power loads at the General Sales Meeting on January 4th. “The loads we overlook as unimportant could be made to bring in more revenue than any one of the big power loads that we have on our lines now.”

This fact was most forcibly brought out by the use of an electric clock motor as an example of what a small load can do. “If one electric clock,” said Mr. Robinson, “were placed in the home of each of our 37,000 customers, it would add 972,360 kilowatt hours to our lines in a year’s time, and I wish I knew where there was a big power load we could get that would yield as much net revenue in a year.”

Mr. Robinson went on to explain that our system covered 400 miles of line serving 137 towns, many of which are rural, and we have capacity to take care of any small loads we can find with little additional expense.

“Everyone of you should be familiar with the Retail Power Rates in the territory in which you work as they are block rates and very simple to figure. You should look around the towns’ print shops, bakeries, meat markets, restaurants, garages, etc., because you can usually find a place where they could be using electric current for the jobs they have to do.

“Examples of possible loads are glue pots and various small printing motors and electric welding; meat market, restaurant or drug store refrigeration, mechanical water coolers, ventilating fans for offices and restaurants, electric pumps for filling stations, and home attic ventilation or home air conditioning.

“In the rural towns, the people are prospects for dairy refrigeration, cream separators, food choppers, corn shellers, grist mills and power for small shops.”

## Useful Ideas

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The Rose room of Hotel Beaumont, where the program was presented and luncheon was served, had been adequately prepared for the occasion. Stages, which added to the effectiveness of the speeches and the presentation of the merchandise, had been built at one end of the long room.

With Mr. McChesney presiding, the meeting was called to order at 9:45 A. M. Mr. Walker, first on the program, welcomed the visitors. A “Loud-speaker” long distance telephone talk by Mr. Hanlon, vice president of Engineers Public Service Company followed at 10:05.

After Mr. Hanlon’s talk, which came all the way from New York, Mr. Faber discussed briefly and interestingly the work that had been accomplished in tax matters. He was followed by Mr. Terrell, Mr. Reidy, who outlined the safety program, and Mr. Cargill, who demonstrated rural line construction.

All of these talks are summarized elsewhere in this issue of Plain Talks.

Starting with a novel introduction of the company’s 1936 merchandising slogan “The Better Way is the Electric Way”—an electric sign above the central stage which flashed on at a cue from Mr. McChesney—and a bit of humor when Mr. Terrell made good on his promise at last year’s meeting to get a double breasted suit if we achieved the goal of 728 Kwh per home customer, the afternoon session was devoted to sales problems and sales work.

Mr. Robinson discussed the possibilities of small power loads. Mr. Whiton talked on demonstrated illumination, using the central stage.

Using the loud-speaker long distance telephone hookup, Mr. James B. Bailey, president of the company which manufactures Sepco water heaters, talked from Philadelphia, Mr. Gerald Hulett, vice president of Electromaster, talked from Detroit and Mr. P. B. Zimmerman, of the General Electric company talked from his home in Cleveland.

At the conclusion of the talks the curtains on wings at either side of the central stage were pulled back, revealing the major appliance merchandise. A new Electromaster range, shipped for the meeting, failed to arrive, but when it was revealed that we will have the General Electric Flatop refrigerator in



porcelain to sell this year the applause was spontaneous.

The telephone talks were followed by pointers of selling, by Mr. Fred Johnson. Mr. Walker followed Mr. Johnson and Mr. McChesney brought the meeting to a close with a discussion of the job ahead in 1936.

You will find summaries of these afternoon talks along with those made during the morning reported elsewhere in Plain Talks.

If remarks made to our reporter and overheard in the hotel lobby can be believed, the meeting was "the best ever" and one that should prove very helpful.



## Four Points

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a customer 'phones in to ask about an appliance, or comes in to see them, don't let it stop there, push it to a sale.

- c. Use the newspapers—Look at the marriage license column for new homes that will be started. Get in there first and sell them electrical appliances. Then remember that people give gifts to the bride and groom. Another column is the death notice column. That sounds queer but you know where insurance is left to a family, it is going to be spent. Oil leases mean that folks have money coming in and somebody's going to get it, we may as well get our share.

**"Third—Presentation of your story to the customer.**

Your personal appearance means a great deal. No customer wants to buy from a slouchy looking salesman. Down at the Eastern Texas Electric Co., they have a long mirror placed right where everybody can see themselves as they come in. Above it is a sign,

"Look Yourself Over. If you look all right, then go ahead." This is a good thing so that a salesman can see himself as others do. Tell your story to the customer in the language she talks, and let her talk. You can find time to get your sales talk in and probably find out her weakness for the product by letting her talk.

**"Fourth—Close your sale and get the money.** The time element enters strongly into a sale. Use your best judgment as to when to call on a customer and when to close the sale. Don't call on a woman if you know she's having company or taking a nap.

"Close your sale at the psychological moment. If you don't get your sale the first time, don't give up, try again. My mother used to bake cakes in an old fashioned wood stove, the kind you had to open the oven door of and look at the cake every once in a while. When she'd think the cake was done, she'd take it out and try it with a broom straw. If the straw came out wet, she'd put the cake back in to cook some more. If it came out dry, the cake was done. Same way with a customer. When you've given him a sales talk and you think he's ready to sign on the dotted line, then try to close the sale but if he 'comes out wet', put him back in the oven of your sales talk, 'til he is done.

"Of course, a good salesman get's the money when he makes the sale, either down payment or cash, and lot's of people would pay cash if it were suggested to them.

"Remember, don't sell just the merchandise. Sell what it will do because after all service is what we sell. A lady is not interested in steel, wool, or Monitor Tops, but in dependable refrigeration.

"Your best capital is yourself and it pays dividends as you use it."



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## PLAIN TALKS

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Published by and for employees of Gulf States Utilities Company as a medium for a better appreciation of our responsibilities to each other and the public.

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### Ten Years

This issue of Plain Talks, as you can see for yourself, is devoted largely to reports of the general meeting recently held in Beaumont. It might well be called our convention special.

We believe you will find the reports of talks interesting, informative and thought provoking. If you attended the meeting you will wish to refresh your memory of what was said. If you were not among those present you will be able, we hope, to get a good idea of what went on by reading this issue from cover to cover.

It was ten years ago this month that the writer became an employee of Gulf States Utilities Company and assisted in the preparation of the January, 1926, issue of this publication. Many changes in personnel and practice have taken place in the company since that time.

To the writer the most interesting and valuable development of the decade has been in the mental attitude of members of our organization. Ten years ago there was, despite any protestations that might have been made to the contrary, an inclination on the part of employees to consider ourselves as working for a department of the company rather than as an employee of the company. This was due, no doubt, to the fact that most of us were newcomers to a new organization which was expanding so rapidly we had our hands full minding our department's business. But the fact remains, that our attitude was pretty much one of "you mind your business and I'll mind mine."

Today, and we believe it was evident to all who attended the meeting, there is a different spirit. There is emphatically a spirit of "one for all and all for one." There is genuine feeling that we are working for a company, not departments. Our attitude is "I'll help you with your job and you help me with mine and together we will get the big job done."

More valuable than all of our franchises, than all our real estate and tur-

## Employees Urged to Join Association

The Gulf States Utilities Employees Benevolent Association was adopted at an election on December 20, without a dissenting vote. This new Association became operative January 1. The officers and board of directors for this new Association are: Chas. DeCuir, President; Cecil Nantz, Vice President; C. E. Henry, Secretary & Treasurer.

Board of Directors: R. E. Morton, Navasota Division; W. T. Straughn, Production Department; Cecil Nantz, Beaumont Transmission, Dist. & Engr. Depts.; C. DeCuir, Port Arthur Division; A. G. Fontana, Beaumont General Office, Liberty Div., & Orange, Jasper, Silsbee; J. M. Dugan, Louisiana Division; Tom P. Walker.

The Association has obtained a new charter and is replacing the old Benefit Association which has since September 1, 1935 been conducted by a board of trustees. The membership dues are 50c a member a month and the Company will contribute a like amount. The benefits of the new Association include all of those of the old Association and in addition, some substantially increased benefits.

A membership campaign is to be conducted beginning immediately and it is hoped that every white employee of this company will take advantage of this opportunity to get so many benefits at so small an expense. If any member has any questions in connection with the operation of the Association, it is suggested that he take them up with his director.

The constitution and by-laws of this Association were thoughtfully written and the Association will prove very attractive and beneficial to employees.

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bines and copper wire and merchandise is this spirit that has developed within us all during the past decade. It is a spirit that could not be created synthetically over night. It had to develop gradually, founded on close association and growing appreciation of the other fellow's problems. We have weathered bad times as well as good times. We have lived together in sickness and in health. We have played together and fought side by side against common enemies.

There is a Gulf States Family.



# Poor Lighting

(Continued from page 5)

words, the average consumption for correct home lighting is from 40 to 50 Kwh per month.

"About 9000 of our customers are now using only 15 Kwh per month," Mr. Whiton declared, "10,000 use 25 Kwh, and only about 2000 use Sight Saver lamps which give them proper lighting.

"While the lighting in most homes is a good deal better than terrible, still it is a long way from being safe for eyes. National figures prove this to be true elsewhere than in just our territory as only about 1% of the people in the U. S. really have good lighting in their homes."

Mr. Whiton then turned to an easel where charts were suspended illustrating the fact that 23% of persons aged 20 have defective eyesight, 39% of those aged 30, 48% aged 40, 71% aged 50, 82% aged 60 and 95% of those aged 70, which proves that the majority of people today are cheated out of a portion of their enjoyment of life. The second chart showed how eyestrain causes this reduced enjoyment of living—through nervousness, headaches, indigestion, waste of energy, fatigue, and strain of heart.

"The bad part about it is that people don't realize this condition until it is too late to correct defective eyesight. Eyestrain gives a warning through headaches, nervousness, etc. but there is nothing to tell you definitely that it is your eyes that are sick. You can feel a piece of dust in your eye and know immediately that you must remove it to get comfort, but eye strain is usually serious before a person thinks of it. Then you may get the correct lighting in your home, and perhaps wear glasses, which will help a great deal of course, but you can never regain the normal eyesight you once had.

"That is why good lighting is so im-

portant a field to develop in the home. For only about \$1 a month more, a customer could make a noted improvement in lighting. For him, this would mean much better eyesight which would result in a greater enjoyment of life. For us, if each of our customers burned a dollar's worth more light, it would mean a half million dollars additional revenue at the end of the year.

"So we will be doing ourselves a great favor and our customers too if we correct poor lighting in homes.

"Just how are we going about it? By selling more Sight Savers."

After demonstrating the Sight Saver Senior Floor Model, with all other lights off, he showed the advantages of an improved model drop shade over the glaring 60 watt drop light that you so often find in homes. "These are not I. E. S. shades", Mr. Whiton stated, "but are highly recommended for homes where there are no wall plugs and the center drop must be used."

The following chart was shown of wattages recommended for the principal lighting units:

PORTABLES	
Type	Wattage
I. E. S. Sr.....	300 Tri-light
Large Floor .....	200 Total
Small Floor .....	150 Total
Bridge .....	75 Watts
Table .....	120 Total
CENTER FIXTURES	
Room	Wattage
Living .....	200
Dining .....	200
Breakfast .....	100
Kitchen .....	150
Bath .....	100
Bed .....	120

In closing, Mr. Whiton stated that he had only covered the residential lighting field, but that the commercial was equally important. "Now that times are getting better," he said, "people are making improvements in commercial establishments as well as their homes, and we want to be sure that we get our share."



# Resolve To Play Safe

Safety Director Reidy recommends the following safety resolutions:

RESOLVED, to do everything in my power to defend the cause of Safety within our Company and to cooperate with our State and Nation in reducing the appalling number of deaths due to home, highway and industrial accidents.

It is worth while to make this resolution, and will you keep it?

Statistics compiled by the National Safety Council of which our Company is a member show that the total deaths attributed to the three causes above mentioned during 1935 will reach over 100,000. With the publication of every newspaper and magazine comes the story of human life being snuffed out by carelessness thoughtlessness and selfishness, and most of these fatalities can be attributed to human failure rather than mechanical failure.

Our Company has a Safety Program in effect which covers every phase of Safety. We know that you are familiar with some phases of our program, and in the near future, it is our aim to thoroughly acquaint you with the entire program, which is to include Safety meetings in all departments, inspections of all buildings and equipment, educational work to improve the minds and bodies of all employees and compulsory rigid physical examinations for all prospective employees before they are placed on the pay roll. As time goes on, it is possible that this last policy will be extended to every member of the organization.

First Aid Teams are being organized and our First Aid equipment standardized. Health and Safety posters will be sent out periodically.

We earnestly solicit 100% cooperation from you.

## New Line Construction Developed

"There is a definite coordination between distribution work and sales," said Mr. Terrell in his brief remarks at the general meeting. Comparing our organization to a three-legged stool, with each department dependent on the other

for its living, he explained that the distribution department had 'tailored' our type of construction to meet the growing demands for service in the outlying territory. With these words, he introduced Mr. Cargill who told in detail of the growth of our distribution system using actual exhibits of the different types of construction.

Mr. Cargill brought out that as our territory expanded and we took on additional load, we had altered design to meet changing conditions. Paralleling the growth of our system in rural territory, he explained, was the development by manufacturers of practical types of ranges, water heaters, mechanical refrigerators and other appliances making it possible for rural home life to be just as attractive as city home life. At the same time also came the improvement in electrically operated farm equipment.

Mr. Cargill went on to tell of the first type of construction used in rural territory when people used lights and nothing more. "Then of course it was possible for us to extend our lines only to the more thickly settled communities."

"People are becoming more educated every day in the use of electric equipment and appliances and as the demand for service has grown, we have had to make tremendous improvements in our distribution construction so that we can economically serve them," Mr. Cargill said. "We have had to look forward and see what can be done in the future and plan our construction with such expansion in mind."

Pointing to the sample structures he explained that on the one hand was a set-up of a standard heavy pole with regulation crossarms and transformer which is being used in our larger towns, and on the other was a lighter pole with no crossarms and transformer showing the new 7620 volt rural construction. "The steel core aluminum conductors," Mr. Cargill brought out, "will permit longer spans, the poles being 450 feet apart, and thus make this construction more economical for use in outlying territory."

In closing Mr. Cargill said that he felt that they had designed an economical and serviceable rural line and that we had some very good territory as yet unserved where it could be put to use and with the good work of the sales department could be made to pay off.



# EVERY HOME

## NEEDS

# *Sight Saver* LAMPS

They were created with the one purpose in mind . . . of helping people see with greater ease. No other lamp gives you as much useful light for reading or working, and at the same time throws just the right amount of light to the ceiling for general illumination. Sight Savers will not correct defective vision but they do give both the quality and quantity of light to prevent further eyestrain. Employees can buy these lamps at substantial reduction from regular retail prices.

